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ABSTRACT

Papers included in this collection which were originally presented at the inaugural meeting of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education are: "Introduction: Toward a Socially Progressive Conception of Art Education" (R. Bersson); "Established Ways of Thinking" (J. Hobbs); "Needed: A New View of Art and Emotions" (A. Sherman); "Statement for Social Theory Caucus" (V. Lanier); "Technological Metaphors in the Contemporary Landscape" (E. Kotz); and "Contemporary Sociological Theory and the Study of Art Education" (N. Johnson). (DB)

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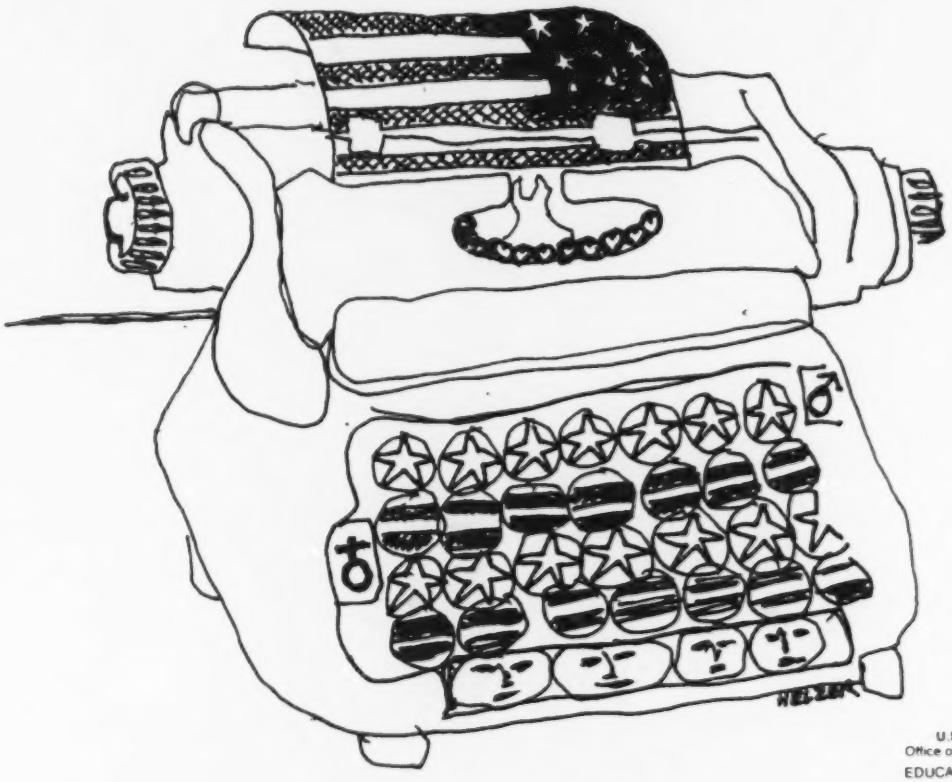

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The following papers were presented during the inaugural session of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education during the National Art Education Association Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, 1980. Peter Helzer and Ellen Kotz from the University of Oregon and Robert Bersson from James Madison University have complied and edited these papers to show the diverse range of concerns of members of the Caucus. We hope these papers will stimulate contributions and dialogue that will expand in the years to come.

We would like to thank the University of Oregon's Institute for Community Art Studies and the James Madison University Art Department for their assistance in typing these papers. We look forward to the continued success of the Social Theory Caucus and the establishment of an annual Caucus Bulletin in the years to come.

Peter Helzer
Ellen Kotz
Robert Bersson

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CAUCUS ON SOCIAL THEORY AND ART EDUCATION

Dr. Robert Bersson
James Madison University
Harrisonburg, Virginia

INTRODUCTION: "Toward A Socially Progressive Conception of Art Education"

I would like to welcome all of you to the first formal session of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education. It has been my privilege to serve as the coordinator of the Caucus in this, the first year of what should prove to be a very long and fruitful existence.

As a Caucus, we are made up of art educators from the United States, Canada, West Germany, and New Zealand. Our membership is open to all and new participants are always welcome. As individuals, we are of different backgrounds and ideological persuasions, but we do share a common vision and goal: the development in theory and practice of an art education which is socially relevant and progressive.

What do we mean by an art education which is socially relevant and progressive? Our first Caucus activity, the panel presentation entitled, "Toward A Socially Progressive Conception of Art Education," will focus on just that question and will accordingly provide some of the initial answers. As we move through the afternoon, from the panel presentation and ensuing discussion, to Ellen Kotz' paper "Technological Metaphors in the Contemporary Landscape," to Nancy Johnson's presentation, "Contemporary Sociological Theories and the Study of Art Education," I think you will begin to sense that something quite exciting and important is taking place; that a birth process is under way; that what is emerging and taking organizational form is a new current and possibly even a new direction for art education in the eighties. To think such thoughts is certainly to be optimistic, but I do not believe that such optimism is unwarranted. Given a committed Caucus membership and the severe challenges faced by art education in an advanced industrial capitalist society, I think it has

become our urgent responsibility to develop and implement wherever possible, forms of art education which will serve humanistic and socially progressive ends.

I cannot help but think that we, as a Caucus, have come together out of necessity, as a counterforce or, at very least, a complement to these conceptions of art education which are largely asocial and non-critical, which zealously emphasize the discipline or the individual, but largely ignore -- in actual theory and practice -- the anti-aesthetic, anti-humanistic aspects of the world in which we live. These contemporary conceptions of art education -- be they child-centered, discipline-centered, or, as Vincent Lanier pointed out in this morning's General Session, Rockefeller-centered -- share one thing in common: a benign -- or in the case of Rockefeller-centered art education -- a not so benign neglect of the larger social, political, economic, and technocratic forces that determine our visual culture, control the mass media, mold our educational institutions, and shape the very form and content of our individual lives.

Given the range and subtlety of our cultural conditioning, art education must, of necessity, become critical. It must place critical cultural literacy in the heart of its theory and practice. Cultural literacy does indeed open the way to personal and social emancipation. It brings in its enlightening wake the preconditions of emancipation, knowledge and freedom: knowledge and freedom to think, feel, and perceive as human individuals and not as manipulated social products; knowledge and freedom to experience and create forms of visual culture which are liberating rather than enslaving; knowledge and freedom to conceptualize and build toward a more aesthetic, humane, and democratic culture and society; knowledge and freedom to develop an art education which would be an agent of critical understanding and progressive social change.

The following paper was presented by Jack Hobbs as a part of a panel discussion, "Toward a Socially Progressive Conception of Art Education," at the 1980 conference in Atlanta. As stated in the program: "Given the proposition that contemporary art education places insufficient emphasis on the interrelationship between art and society, the panelists will attempt to define what a 'socially relevant' or 'socially progressive' art education is or might be." However, Hobbs (the first presenter on the panel) attempted to show how present-day attitudes in art education do not favor such a direction. Besides Hobbs, the panel consisted of Robert Bersson (moderator), Edmund Feldman, Vincent Lanier, and Ann Sherman.

ESTABLISHED WAYS OF THINKING

Jack Hobbs
Associate Professor of Art
Illinois State University

"Toward a Socially Progressive Conception of Art Education" suggests that each panelist is going to advance a proposal for a new kind of art education -- presumably one whose philosophy and practice are more socially progressive than the kind we now have. I do have some concepts about what art education should be, but I prefer to focus more on what art education <u>is</u> because I think we ought first of all to be very aware of the traditional thinking of the field and the ways in which that thinking is contrary to developing a socially progressive philosophy.

I want to make it clear that I am not one who necessarily delights in assailing anyone, especially my colleagues, for their allegedly antiquated ideas. Like a lot of people, I got my fill of iconoclasm for iconoclasm's sake in the sixties and early seventies, and I am not, in principle, opposed to traditional views. But to say that art education harbors a number of deeply ingrained, unexamined attitudes -- what Vincent Lanier has called "vulnerable ideas" -- is not an uncalled for charge.

To say this is also very ironic becuase, if there is anything that art educators take pride in, it is their open mindedness and ability to beget innovation (called variously "divergent thinking" and "creativity"). But in fact, the basic practice of art education (as manifested in the schools and in teacher training) has not changed very much since World War II. In other words, the liberal image of art education, which is continually nourished by an altruistic and idealistic rhetoric, is belied by its seeming inability to make substantive changes.

Indeed the lack of creative thinking -- especially about social concerns -- may be more pronounced in art education than it is in other professions. Since the world of art itself does not have much social relevance, teachers of art are less likely to come into contact with new ideas having social currency. Unlike teachers of biology, they do not have collegues working on the frontiers of medical research or making an impact on agricultural problems in Africa. Unlike teachers of English, they are not associated with a field in which people win Pulitzer prizes for new ideas and original uses of the language. At one time, art teachers perhaps received inspiration from the artistic avant-garde, but since the halcyon days of Abstract Expressionism and the explosive movements of the sixties, the avant-garde has been notably quiet and uninteresting.

Art education's comparative lack of stimulation from outside is inversely related to the stimulation it received from inside. In other words, art education tends to feed on itself rather than being responsive to intellectual and social developments in the world at large, let alone having any impact on those developments. The primary source of art education's intellectual nourishment is the university art department because that is where the future art teacher is trained, where the current art teacher sometimes returns to become retrained,

and where most of the writing is generated that appears in the various NAEA publications. (It is also where I work.) Thus it will be useful to describe some prevailing attitudes and values of this source in order to understand the world view of the average art educator. The balance of this paper will conduct such an analysis from three different perspectives: that of the department as a whole; that of the art education area; and that of recent graduates in art education. I think that it will become apparent from these perspectives that the world view fostered by the university art department is not conducive to a "socially progressive conception of art education."

THE VALUES OF A TYPICAL ART DEPARTMENT

Art departments differ greatly in size, structure, and curriculum, so it is difficult to make generalizations. But I think it would be fair to say that the areas of studio, art history, and design are perceived to be the main "cornerstones" of the typical department, with studio being the most important of the three. (Art Education is a fourth cornerstone, but only for those who intend to teach.)

The fact that the studio usually receives first priority is in itself suggestive. This may account for the tendency of many art majors to become very involved in either the technical aspects of making art or the subjective aspects of creativity as opposed to learning more about the philosophical and social aspects of art. In other words, students are encouraged to value the manipulation of forms over that of ideas. Be that as it may, all students are introduced to, and most become committed to, the values of the art world -- a complex of big-city galleries, arts magazines, collectors, reviewers, and critics -- of which university art departments are a minor adjunct. It won't be necessary here to enumerate those values because we are, basically, familiar with them. Not that we all understand the art world very well but most of us share its

overall point of view. Indeed, it is the litmus test for being a professional in art. Interestingly, neither the art world nor its values are understood by very many outside the profession, even those who are well educated.

It could be said that the cornerstone of art history balances that of studio because it values the art of the past rather than the present and stresses the cognitive rather than the creative. But there are parallels between the two. Like studio, art history concerns itself exclusively with the high world of art, in other words, fine art. In the past this meant the art of the ruling classes; today, it means the art of a relatively small art-educated subculture that I mentioned earlier--the art world. Furthermore, the contents of most art history seem to be focused on issues of stylistic provenance more than those of religious, social, and political provenance. Students are almost led to believe that real art history is an unbroken continuum from the caves of Lascaux through Chartres Cathedral, Cezanne, Cubism, to, finally, Post World War II abstraction; that art has a life of its own, a teleological certainty completely free of cultural circumstance.

In the few art department facilities I have seen personally, the design area was located in the basement. (I don't know if this is symbolic or not.) Whereas the studio component stresses the fine arts, the design area stresses the applied arts, but, actually, only for those relatively few who want to concentrate in an applied field, such as commercial art. Most art majors take only "basic" design--usually a requirement. Design, as a term, is open; as a course of study it suggests a broad scope of inquiry--no less than that of considering the ways in which the material culture affects our daily lives, even our realities. But, given the constraints of time, etc., teachers of basic design usually can do little more than teach a few "principles" of design. These principles are usually based on an aesthetic doctrine called "formalism", or, if approached

scientifically, Gestalt theories of organization. As we all know, the principles of design are often ignored or openly mocked in today's art world; formalism, as a theory of art, has little credibility now in the field of aesthetics; and Gestalt theories are out of favor in perceptual psychology. If so, the formalistic approach of basic design would seem to be somewhat out of date, and, if so, one would think that this would present some contradictions. But, as long as it stays in the basement, basic design continues to be tolerated by the rest of the department.

The point of this brief analysis of the typical art department is not to disparage the studio emphasis, the art world and its values, the fine arts emphasis in art history, or even the doctrine of formalism, but to show that these orientations comprise a total orientation that is essentially indifferent to what one might call a socially progressive conception of art. The missing cornerstone, in my judgement, is a "foundations" course--actually a series of such courses--that could help the student to be more sophisticated about the incredibly complicated situation of contemporary aesthetics and to put it in perspective. Even if the content were not committed to a socially progressive philosophy as such, it would at least be committed to making explicit the issues regarding fine art, applied art, and popular art, and their respective roles in society and human imagination.

THE VALUES OF THE TYPICAL ART EDUCATION PROGRAM

Whether art education is included as an area of the art department or is a department of its own probably would not have much effect on the curriculum of an art education program. In either case it would consist of certain core requirements in both art and art education. And the art education major, therefore, would encounter the values of both components; and hopefully, he/she would be able to synthesize both sets of values. The particular values of the art education component are not always, or even necessarily, conveyed by systematic instruction, but by the

nature and emphasis of the curriculum and by the "functional" philosophy of the art education teachers.

Probably, most of these teachers were raised on the art education ideals of the fifties and early sixties. We are all familiar with that era's slogans--self-expression and creativity--as well as what they referred to and entailed as a philosophy of art education. Art education faculty may or may not go along with that philosophy, but, in lieu of a well-articulated philosophy to the contrary, they continue to disseminate it to students (who will soon be teaching art themselves).

Like probably everyone in this room, I am very aware of the self-analysis that has been going on in our discipline over the past twenty years or so. (This panel is but one example of that continuing debate.) But I am also aware of the fact that the two decades of talk has failed to produce very many workable ideas. (One exception, of course, is Edmund Feldman's method of criticism.) More seriously, this dialogue has failed to produce a body of coherent theories. In other words, art education today, does not have an intellectual leadership--at least, not a very united one with a solid program to offer. In lieu of such leadership, the college art educator, typically, falls back on disseminating to his/her students the time-tested art education practice. This consists, simply, of having children make objects. The explicit or implicit rationale for this practice at the elementary level is that, somehow, making these objects is good for children's personality development.

If anything new is being introduced into this traditional practice, it is a degree of so-called "aesthetic education", perhaps the major, single idea to emerge in all the debate I mentioned earlier. But, the application of aesthetic education, as far as I can see, has not gone beyond giving greater attention to the visual elements and the principles of design, in other words, formalism.

The situation of college-level art education is reflected in the professional literature. The two trade magazines--Arts and Activities and School Arts--have not changed significantly since the fifties. They are still providing teachers with "new" ideas for art "projects"--everything from printing with egg cartons to marshmallow mosaics. The two professional journals--Studies and Art Education Journal--have changed their content, but, reflective of the general lack of leadership in the field, their philosophy and proposals have become so many-sided that they are unable, as yet, to function as the beacon for a new direction.

My intent is not to disparage the old values of self-expression and creativity nor the practice of having children make art. Surely there will always be a place for these things in art education -- especially for the younger age groups. I even believe that the making of art, at times, can be "liberating" for older age groups as well. But, this invites the question: why has traditional art education completely ignored the liberating potential of responding to art? For example, the role of popular art and its effects -- good or bad -- on the collective unconscious of children and adults is a vast area of concern that has been largely neglected. But, again, my main purpose here is to show that the focus of traditional art education precludes giving very much attention to the social implications of art in the schools, let alone the possibilities of actually influencing society. And currently, the pluralism found at the leadership level (which, in effect, is no leadership) is of little help, one way or the other.

ATTITUDES OF ART EDUCATION GRADUATES

My analysis of art education graduates is based on first-hand knowledge of those coming to I.S.U. for further study. As advisor of Master's students in general, I have a unique opportunity to learn about the training, thinking, and goals of all our graduate students, regardless of their backgrounds and

the programs they are in. But I get to know, best of all, those in art education because that is my own area. Interestingly, the values that I have just described are literally "reflected back" upon the art department through the attitudes of these people who are returning for further study.

First, let me point out that not all who were former art education majors choose to major in art education at the graduate level. Many of those who have been teaching (and even those who have not) are most attracted to studio programs. (This, despite the fact that our studio programs are mostly filled up and, therefore, I do not encourage any applicants in that direction.) Of course, there could be many reasons for the popularity of studio programs among art educators, both good and bad: some feel that, by finding their identities as artists, they will become better teachers of art; a few still harbor a secret wish to become successful, creative artists. The most disturbing reason would be that some of these people respect studio pursuits more than art educational pursuits. If so, they are paradoxically reflecting a traditional art department attitude--a vicious form of snobbery--that puts down their own field. At any rate, in the overall market place of graduate art programs, the studio-artist model sells better than that of the art historian, the aesthetician, or the art educator. And this is often true even for those who are in art education themselves.

As for those who do elect art education, the excitement of aesthetics, philosophy, or research does not seem to fare much better. Many are interested in just getting the degree, or earning graduate hours to enhance their position on the salary scale, or, simply, picking up some practical suggestions that will help them in their own situation--all of which are legitimate goals, I suppose. But, allow me to make a couple of generalizations about their attitudes related to the profession of art that are germane to our analysis here: 1) many have a dislike of art history, which is reflected in their general lack of knowledge of this area, and 2) most look down on all cognitive approaches to art, which is reflected

in their disinclination to analyze art and to speculate about either its aesthetic or social ramifications. Le me also add two more observations: to their credit, Masters students in art education show a sincere commitment to teaching and improving their own teaching skills; and secondly, on the matter of art history and cognitive approaches, art education majors are no different from their colleagues in studio. What surprises me is that neither group really has a good grasp of 20th century art. Although many can identify the major styles, few have more than a superficial understanding of the social and cultural motivations behind the various art movements of their own time. But, again, why should they? This sort of thing has not been one of their primary interests, nor was it emphasized when they were undergraduates.

SUMMARY

This last point brings me back to the reason for this paper. My purpose was to assess the traditional thinking of art education by analyzing its source, the unversity art department, which I approached from three perspectives: the department as a whole; the art education area; and the art education graduate. That this thinking is indifferent to, if not hostile to, a socially progressive conception of art education is a warranted conclusion, in my judgement.

Perhaps all of us here have, in different ways, transcended this traditional thinking in our own minds. I would like to ask any of you: what specific programs do you have to offer that would reflect your particular thinking--especially having to do with a socially progressive concept? Perhaps we will hear of some from the other panelists.

NEEDED: A NEW VIEW OF ART AND EMOTIONS

Ann Sherman
University of Kansas

Progressives have often neglected or purposely ignored the role of art and emotions in their analyses. Recently, however, critical theorists like Max Horkheiner and Theodore Adorno have focused on the place of the "subjective" (which usually includes art and emotions) in the economic framework of society. That such individuals have attempted to include art and emotions in their broad political/economic dimension is especially important for progressive art educators to pursue at this point in history. Art therapy programs which do not include a political/economic analysis of the images produced or the emotions expressed are becoming a significant entity within our field. The emphasis in these programs is on the use of art materials as a vehicle for catharting emotions. Art materials are provided so that students may express (etymologically "squeeze out") their emotions.

The view of art as a form of catharsis and the absence of a political/economic analysis has definite societal consequences. In the article, "Aesthetic Consciousness: the Ground of Political Experience," Hilde Hein speaks of the political function of the 'art as a means for catharsis' view. Hein says:

> The preservation of political power requires suppression of incipient opposition; but where domination is brutally and ruthlessly displayed, controversy <u>within</u> the political framework enlarges the controllable order. The social body is viewed as a complex and varied whole, enriched and harmonized by containable differences...The political function of aesthetic experience is then seen to be the conservative maintenance of the status quo--art is used in order to defuse and diffuse disgruntled feeling and potentially revolutionary tendencies.[2]

In this type of situation art becomes the blotting paper for dissatisfaction and potentially disruptive emotions. Instead of becoming educated about the political/economic source and depth of emotions and being encouraged to voice

dissatification and disillusionment, emotions are catharted through art and society proceeds as usual. Such a view does not, in my opinion, move us closer to a socially progressive society where people are encouraged to examine the political/economic roots of their existence.

Art therapy programs do provide a needed place for connecting art and emotions: their downfall is in the lack of political/economic analysis and the absence of presenting art materials as a means for constructing and furthering change rather than simply absorbing it. Again, Hein states it succinctly:

> For the individual, aesthetic experience becomes a legitimate mode of expression, literally of expulsion of accumulated anti-social tendencies and impulses...The individual is permitted through art (and other forms of controllable aesthetic experience) to purge his feelings of anger, rage, unrequited love, personal inadequacy, and impotence--all feelings which, if vented in political action, would be disruptive and socially dangerous. Hence we have institutionalized "art therapy" for school children, hospital inmates, and patients in old age homes, and even ghetto inhabitants who are now invited to draw graffiti and wall paintings.[3]

In addition to the importance of developing a view of art and emotions to replace this catharsis view, a new conceptionalization is also needed if we are to progress towards: 1) an analysis of the pervasiveness of the mass media and 2) an elimination of the view of emotions as irrational and, by association, the view of women as irrational.

Many of the images which we experience via television, film, and magazines involve emotions. Of course, the question is how they involve emotions. A common notion is that pictures of, for example, children in a park with balloons, evoke the emotion of joy. Here the emotion is a kind of physiological sensation which is evoked by the picture. However, if emotions are only physiological sensations it would be difficult if not impossible to differentiate between them. For example, we may twitch when we are angry or when we are in love; we may perspire when we are embarassed or fearful; and so forth. Clearly there is

a cognitive or reasoning aspect to emotions as well as a physiological aspect. The emotion of jealousy, for example, consists not only of certain physiological sensations but also of the judgment that someone has something which rightfully belongs to me.

In addition, I propose that emotions have a visual aspect. Emotions consist of physiological sensations, judgments, and certain visual experiences. These visual experiences which are part of our emotions are derived from many sources. A primary source, however, is the mass media. The idea, then, is that images such as those of children and balloons do not simply evoke certain emotions--they present a visual aspect of an emotion.

This view of pictures and emotions stresses the pervasiveness of the mass media. That is, pictures from the mass media are not only influential at the time they are seen, they also shape the way in which we lead our entire emotional life. For example, the picture of two young people running down the beach into the sunset not only affects us while we are sitting in front of the television, it permeates the rest of our life as well. I shudder to think of how many people have tried to structure their day to day experience to fit this visual aspect of the emotion of love. Questions such as, "What are the political/economic implications of a visual aspect of love where the people involved are young and healthy rather than old and handicapped?" could provoke us to reflect upon the political/economic aspect of the images which pervade our day to day emotional life. A theory which stressed the visual aspect of emotions could provide the beginnings of a rationale for such an approach.

A reassessment of our conceptualization of art and emotions is not only essential to a thorough analysis of the pervasive influence of images from the mass media; it is also important to the elimination of sexism.

One of the reasons given for women's supposed inability to be competent intellectuals is that we are too emotional. On the one hand, we are praised for our emotional sensitivity and, on the other hand, we are told that we are too emotional to handle serious decision making. The typical retort to this is to deny that women are necessarily emotional. Instead of this tact, I propose that those of us who do have such insight (and all women do not) take credit for understanding emotions and work towards conceptualizing what this entails. Understanding the judgments, images, and sensations which make up emotions is an accomplishment in the sphere of rationality; it is not an irrational aspect of knowledge which should necessarily be discarded. Unfortunately, the view of emotions as irrational sensations and, by association, the view of women as irrational continues to exist in this society and is promulgated in film and other media. In a recent book on the portrayal of women in film the author states:

> Directors, like Ingmar Bergman, whose films have been mystified into a cult, persist in depicting women as tortured, confused and incapable of rising above a repellent biological frailty. Because Bergman often has women as his subject matter and focus of attention, it is falsely assumed by many women that he has insight into or particular feeling for women...yet...his female characters are more complete in their degradation than are his men because they are out of place and uncomfortable in the world of the mind and the conscious pursuit of meaning...The world cinema today is unable to provide an image of women who achieve through their drives instead of by an unnatural distortion of them.[4]

In sum, I have proposed that a new conceptualization of emotions is needed if we are to progress towards: 1) a critical analysis of emotions rather than a catharsis of them; 2) an evaluation of the pervasive influence of images from the popular arts in our day to day emotional lives; and 3) an elimination of the negative connotations of women's knowledge of emotions. I have not argued why working towards these things is socially progressive. What I have argued is that if moving towards these things is seen as socially progressive, then art educators concerned with social progress must work on re-conceptualizing the existing views of emotions and the arts' place in relationship to them.

NOTES

1. See, for example, the essays in: Critical Theory, edited by Max Horkheimer, N.Y.: The Seabury Press, 1972; T.W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, The Authoritarian Personality, N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969; and the many writings of Herbert Marcuse.

2. Hilde Hein, "Aesthetic Consciousness: the Ground of Political Experience," Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1976, P. 145-6.

3. Ibid, pp. 145 & 146.

4. Joan Mellen, Women and Their Sexuality in the New Film, N.Y.: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1973, pp. 16 & 17.

STATEMENT FOR SOCIAL THEORY CAUCUS

Vincent Lanier
University of Oregon

It may well be that the most radical discovery within recent psychology and social science is the discovery of how so many of the most intimate features of the person are socially patterned and even implanted. Within the broad limits of the glandular and nervous apparatus, the emotions of fear and hatred and love and rage, in all their varieties, must be understood in close and continual reference to the social biography and social context in which they are experienced and expressed. Within the broad limits of the physiology of the sense organs, our very perception of the physical world, the colors we discriminate, the smells we become aware of, the noises we hear, are socially patterned and socially circumscribed. The motivations of men, and even the varying extents to which various types of men are typically aware of them, are to be understood in terms of the vocabularies of motive that prevail in a society and of social changes and confusions among such vocabularies.*

In 1959, when C. Wright Mills made the statement quoted above, the dominant pathway to insight about human behavior was psychological. This situation appears to have been as true in art education as in any other discipline. Our primary conception about what art could do for people was creativity and our pedagogy for attaining this bounty was studio production, uninterrupted by other activities. Writers such as Mills provided us with another dimension for the study of human behavior, and, specifically, behavior in art. It is not that the psychological approach was then or is now incorrect, but rather that it is incomplete. It might be said that art education has not even yet completely absorbed the implications of this alternative outlook.

Happily, there are currents of change burgeoning among us which move in

the direction of Mills' approach, encompassing a wider and more varied range of methodologies of inquiry, as well as teaching content and procedure. Nor have we had to sacrifice caution or system or scholarship to exploit these newer modes of theory and investigation. Most of them are eminently proper, though highly provocative and some of them build on the kind of intellectual development which Mills was writing about.

Since ideas seem always to be reflected in the practical political world, we can look to our professional activities for evidence of this sociological orientation. In 1979, at the San Francisco conference of the NAEA, Robert Bersson started the movement which has grown to become the Social Theory Caucus. This group presented a well-attended and exciting program element at the 1980 Atlanta meeting and is continuing its development through mechanisms such as this bulletin.

I welcome the opportunity to be a member of this Caucus and share with like-minded colleagues the exchange of ideas which we consider to be vital to our profession. I urge the reader who is interested in this direction of study to join the group and participate in our efforts. It is almost axiomatic that there is much to be learned about art education and this approach may be a fruitful posture for that learning. We have very few answers, but we may have some competent questions.

*Mills, C. Wright, The Sociological Imagination, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1959, pp. 161, 162.

TECHNOLOGICAL METAPHORS IN THE CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE

Ellen Kotz
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"First we build our buildings and then our buildings build us," Churchill once said. A Walt Whitman poem describes a similar relationship between buildings and the people who live in them: "A child went forth," and the first thing he saw he became on that day, and from that day forward. These two statements express different aspects of the metaphorical and symbolic level of form and our capacity to shape our environment according to our values, culture, and aspirations. Often our forms are pregnant with meaning that we don't understand. The buildings and environmental forms we shape in turn shape our consciousness; and within this new framework we further design new buildings. Forms can be metaphors or symbols for states of being, and these forms with their meaning for good or ill can imprint the subconscious mind and affect future action.

Walking to school and sitting in school a child absorbs the surroundings. "This is a bad school, and I am a bad girl," said a first grade child, epitomizing Walt Whitman's lines, as she kicked the broken wall and barbed wire fence covering the window, her tattered shoe skimming the surface of broken glass. Subconsciously, nonverbally, this child understood the cultural messages which she had inherited from her society and ingested as a reflection of herself. The school was seen as a prison; she was by implication a prisoner in a world she had not created and could not understand. Permanently implanted in the depths of her mind, in future years such a symbol could epitomize her self-esteem. As a designer or viewer she could continue to perpetuate this symbol on future school children without realizing its power and possible meaning.

These symbols express our attitudes and root ideas. In the Egyptian language, hieroglyphics were symbols which had great power because the concrete

image could expand to multiple meanings of many layers beyond the image. Humans are carriers of their culture and activities which occur on many simultaneous levels, including a symbolic or metaphorical level. New activities generally automatically repeat inherited patterns, unless for some reason we examine the deep structure or underlying causes of this pattern. Art education can train people to read and interpret the levels of meaning contained in symbols or the metaphoric nature of public and personal events and objects. Once we understand possible symbolic meanings that things have we can evaluate the meanings and decide how to recombine or reorganize them directing the meanings of the symbols we use.

Our unconscious manipulation of symbols to reflect our values is evident in a variety of activities. The division of time into uniform segments to compose a school day, our use of everyday language, and the design of cities and living spaces are three examples of this phenomenon. These symbols then unconsciously affect the observed layers of our behavior, and further perpetuate their own patterns. There are a preponderance of technological words that have invaded our everyday language and physical forms. For instance, we speak of "input-output" as factors in relationships, or "feedback" we are receiving from our friends. Technological metaphors have entered the sphere of human thinking and interaction and colored the words we use to describe our activities.

When a child sits in a math class, for example, there are many other lessons being learned besides math in a non-explicit way. Let us take some examples: the division of the class into 45 minute segments or the division of the building into separate rooms off a long corridor. While the child is learning English or math, on a subliminal level the child is learning about dividing time. From the structure of the class, the child ingests time as a commodity; it can be captured, cut up into tiny units by a machine called a clock, and released by

the arbitrary ringing of bells. Sitting in class the child learns to divide time, to end one activity and begin a new one with the ring of a bell. Soon, he learns how to gauge his emotional involvement accordingly. Spatially, the child may perceive uniformity, equanimity, and sterility in the classroom design and arrangement, learning that neutrality and cleanliness and fitting-in are appropriate personal goals. Inside the class, the teacher stands at the front of the room, the very pose and relationship designating a hierarchy and power exchange.

Just as the child learns more than math from sitting in math class, so we all learn lessons from the buildings around us and their configurations. As architecture provides the setting of our actions and surrounds us daily, it can be a metaphor for our life. Even its vocabulary expresses states of feeling and existence. The words, "wall," "door," "entrance," "threshhold," "step," "foundation," "structure," "frame," "ceiling," are architectural attributes and also reflective of states of existence. I am sure each of us can think of many examples of how these words are used in expressions. "She is on the threshhold of adulthood," "every new endeavor requires a step at a time." Thus, on a very direct iconic level architectural components can symbolize our emotional and existential states. These metaphors or symbols are deeper, however, because we are not generally aware of their transfer from one part of our lives to another. Architecture is architecture, emotions are emotions, and words are words. The play between them is subtle, but once we understand their relationships, we cannot escape the impact. Thus, the way we design these components expresses how we feel about our own or societal "threshholds" and "entrances."

The messages of the buildings are subtle and silent, but they symbolically impress upon our consciousness, and we carry them with us to other activities

and spheres of action. They reinforce and extend their patterns to every aspect of our lives. That rational arbitrary division of time into equal units which occurs is one aspect of daily life that is graphically or iconically represented in how we design our landscape. In the same way that we fragment time and subjects into classroom compartments, we also set up our spatial components in our landscape designating areas for housing, schools, industries, and business, making sure that no one use encroaches on any other. The fragmentation and division of daily activities of our thoughts is reflected in our minds.

If one is trained to work with symbols, one learns what they mean and thus combines them in an attempt to direct their meanings. Those meanings may exaggerate the conditions of the times, represent the conditions of the times, or redirect the directions of the times. Even if one is not trained to work with symbols, one still uses them. The builder, the developer, or the planner who designs the landscape works with inherited forms and is generally unaware of the underlying messages that they carry. These city builders rely on precedent and market surveys and preference polls with little realization of how their designs are the perpetuators of a value system and a thought pattern that extends to every aspect of human life. The school administrator who constructs a school day is far more concerned with teaching math, English, and the other necessary subjects and cramming them into the allotted time, than the message for the student that the dividing of time is dividing the person and dividing the mind of the person. Thus, the city builder and school administrator perpetuate a system without understanding the system they are perpetuating. Understanding the underlying meanings of the forms and concepts that we use in our daily life, particularly in the public arena, can allow us to influence a changing conception of our lives.

Mirceau Eliade, in his study The Sacred and the Profane, investigates the arrangement of space by religious man. He suggests that man always searched for a center; this center represented the center of the cosmos, of the universe, of the world of the person, of internal individual. The center was distinguished from the rest of the world or from the rest of the local area. It was often marked by a pole in primitive tribal society or it was left open as a recession, surrounded by dwellings and other functions. It was distinguishable.

> Revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogenity, to "found the world" and to live in a real sense. The profane experience, on the contrary, maintains the homogenity and hence the reality of space. No true orientation is now possible.

Eliade generally attributes the sacred dimension to the vertical, a reaching towards the heavens, and the horizontal is the profane non-religious dimension. Thus, on a symbolic or metaphorical level space can be organized into a center and a surround; the surround represents the profane and the center, the sacred.

Do we have a center in our modern cities and how do we locate it? What functions do we attribute to our center, our vertical and horizontal dimensions? The symbolic center of our cities have been turned over to the management, financial, and business sectors--their physical location and verticality are a concrete testimony to their sacredness in our societal perspective. Within Eliade's framework, it is the monuments of technology, the homes of technological superstructure that become the churches of the modern world. It is those buildings that occupy the center-posts of the cosmos.

Victor Gruen's book, The Heart of the Cities, was published in the early 1960's and in a sense institutionalized a metaphor that offered a concrete example of Eliade's idea of the center and the impact of a simple concept, "the heart", on the organization of our cities. Gruen also gave expression to a pattern which

was burgeoning in our cities with the metaphor: the center as the "heart", the "heart" as the financial and business superstructure. He described a way to develop a mall to revitalize the inner city core. Soon this pattern was adopted in numerous cities with little regard for context or its appropriateness for the particular condition. Shopping center "hearts" of the same type grew up in small towns, large cities, and in suburban areas, a phenomenon described as the "malling of America" in retrospect. The metaphor had lost its original association and become a patent solution, a symbol of our central values.

Surrounding the "the heart", the center-post, is profane space which is a chaotic and disorganized mass. In our society, this is a homogenous sprawling landscape, a mass of dwellings and buildings for daily functions that composes the surrounds of sacred center. It is generally organized in a monotonous uniformity that becomes confusing and chaotic in its very excess of order. It lacks landmarks and contextural references for orientation that the spontaneous landscape provides.

If we look at almost any urban-suburban area we can find some similarities in the landscape we perceive. The structure of metropolitan configurations have lost their particularity and continue to grow towards homogenous forms. In the core of the city, we find increasing concentrations of towering buildings which house the material and business functions of culture. Buildings owned and constructed by banks and the largest corporations dominate the skyline in any major metropolitan area. At their feet, the work functions of daily life cluster. Within the command of the vistas of these commercial towers lie the physical settings of the rest of a person's life--schools, dwellings, recreation facilities. From the business, commercial or financial sector as the central function, we drive on an endless mass of swirling roads which separate our dwellings in their suburban terrain from the corporate structures downtown. Structured in uniform rows,

houses follow particular setbacks and alignments. Each is like its neighbor with only superficial differences of color and a few details as signs of recognition. A repetitious rhythm of housing and yards blanket the land, only to be relieved by an occasional school or playing field, carefully insulated from its neighbor and camouflaged in design. Each house has been carefully analyzed to reflect the appropriate spatial size and configuration of space for families of a given size and age range.

The monuments of the corporate structure lie at the sacred center or "heart" of our cities while the metaphor of the machine or technology, a landscape of rationality, expands towards the outlying areas. It is ordered and measured and yet with its measured order is a return to chaos, a quilt of pieces that are all the same so we cannot tell where we are and it doesn't make any difference anyway.

> The landscape of reflection and reason is the landscape either created directly by the application of rational scientific techniques to particular settings, or experienced through the adapted attitudes of rationalism... it is a strangely passionless landscape which seems to deny deep experiences or close attachments.

The physical forms of the contemporary landscape are metaphors of rationality and logic. The arrangement of the forms epitomizes the dichotomization and segmentation of our daily lives and in turn becomes imprinted on our consciousness accelerating segmentation in other areas of our life.

Like Gruen's "heart" of the cities, Le Corbu's view of buildings and cities as "machines for living" captured the imaginations of modern architects and planners, perhaps because it embodied much of the reverence for the new discoveries and improvements in technology prevalent throughout the 1900's. In 1929, Le Corbu wrote:

> The Plan is the Generator,
> Without a plan, you have a lack of order and willfulness....
> Modern life demands, and is waiting for, a new kind of plan,
> both for the house and for the city....

> The house is a machine for living in...
> If we eliminate from our hearts and minds all dead concepts in regard to the house, and look at the question from a critical and objective point of view, we shall arrive at the "House--Machine"....
> Chance will be replaced by foresight, programme will succeed improvisation. Each case will be integrated into the regional plan; the land will be measured and assigned to various activities: there will be clear regulations governing the project which will be started immediately and carried out by successive stages. The law will establish permanent building regulations providing each key function with means to achieve optimum expression, through seeing situated in the most favorable locations and at the most useful distances.

This particular way of thinking and designing is a sharp break from past interaction patterns. Jurgen Habermas explores the underlying roots of the thinking which could result in such a physical form in his work, Towards a Rational Society. He compares what he calls "communicative action" with "purposive rationality". When processes happen through communicative action, they develop through unfolding traditions, through dialogues, whether it be the construction of a school day or the design of a town. The patterns arise spontaneously and then become legitimized or accepted because they are bonding traditions. The processes of purposive rationality are those of rules and laws. Instead of an internal system they are imposed externally and rigidly enforced. They are the products of methodical or scientific experimentation rather than the evolution of form. The metaphor of the "house as machine" fits with purposive rationality. It may not be possible to eliminate metaphors or the symbolic nature of expression in the landscape. This is not the goal of this discussion; it is possible, however, to understand how to read the symbolic or metaphor level of meaning and evaluate the appropriateness of the metaphor in its context.

Once we understand the implications of a metaphor or symbol and begin to see how it developed and spread within our society, we can explore its nature. Currently, it appears that many people are beginning to reexamine the twentieth century metaphors which we have long taken for granted. Is the "heart" an appropriate metaphor for

the center of the city? If so what are the meanings of the symbol? Are the financial structures and corporate sectors satisfactory expressions of such a center. Is the "machine" the most effective symbol for the quality of life we would like to achieve in our houses? If we are to operate metaphorically, how do we understand the metaphors which we use unconsciously, evaluate their appropriateness, use them effectively, and derive new metaphors which express the values which we would like to hold.

Richard H. Brown in his work, A Poetic for Sociology, 1978 (Cambridge), suggests a framework for approaching metaphors.

> That metaphor retains its consciously 'as if' quality is thus a pivotal point, for on it turns the difference between using metaphors and being used by them. Awareness of our use of metaphor provides an escape hatch from the prison house of language or at least lets us know that we are confined. To unmask metaphors that have become myths requires negative insight and circumspection; to create new metaphors is a leap of the imagination. It not only demands that we say "No" to the organization of experience as it is given to us in preordained categories, but it also requires us to rearrange cognition into new forms and associations....The choice is between more or less fruitful metaphors, and between using them and being their victims."

What will be our future metaphors and how will they serve us? As art educators, we can have a hand training our students to read them as they are being formed and thus to have a voice in their direction.

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CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND THE STUDY OF ART EDUCATION

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A popular approach to inquiry in art education is through the theoretical frameworks of psychology (Brouch and others, 1975). By choosing this approach, art educators also adopt an organic, psychological, context-free perspective on human beings. Consequently, many art educators, like many psychologists, do not take account of or examine the social context of the individuals they study (Mishler, 1979). What is more, people are studied from an objective stance by methods of observation and measurement, that is, descriptive and experimental research borrowed from the natural or physical sciences (Armstrong, 1978). Borrowed, too, with this approcah, is the assumption that human behavior is similar to that of animals and bound by the same general laws that govern all natural phenomena. Thus, there is an interesting paradox that is created by adopting traditional psychological theories and methods and applying them to art education. This paradox is that art educators do not really believe that art and artistic behavior are rule-governed (Eisner, 1980) or the result of genetic programming, yet they study art and the teaching of it through theories and methods whose basic assumptions deny such a possibility. From the framework of psychology then, certain phenomena that I believe are important to the appearance of art are excluded from study. These phenomena are: social context; social beliefs and knowledge; meanings about art; that is, interpretation, social interaction, and the process of constructing knowledge about art. If, as art educators, we choose not to adopt the traditional theories, methods, assumptions, and limitations of psychology, then how can art education be studied? What other approaches may be taken to gain knowledge about human

beings and art?

The purpose of this paper is to explore some approaches to inquiry used in another discipline, that of sociology (Wells, 1978). This is not to say that sociologists have overwhelmingly abandoned the use of the structures of the natural sciences in their work in favor of other alternatives, but to recognize some mavericks in their ranks who do what sociologist, Monica Morris (1977), has called creative sociology. The approaches to theory and method to be examined here are symbolic interactionism, phenomenological sociology, and ethnomethodology. The implications of these approaches for the study of art education will also be examined.

Symbolic Interactionism

Of these three radical viewpoints in sociology, symbolic interactionism is the most accepted position. A reason for this might be the fact that it is a viewpoint that emerged in sociology in the 1920's and 30's from the thoughts and activities of several persons at the University of Chicago whereas the other viewpoints are more recent arrivals.

One of the key figures in the development of symbolic interactionism is the philosopher, George Herbert Mead (1962), who was a good friend of John Dewey. While Mead's work is not as well known or as wide-ranging as Dewey's, his ideas are quite substantive. Mead's ideas center around the concepts of a self-conscious, reflexive mind and a personality or self that is formed through social interaction. According to Mead, the self is not a static entity fixed at birth, but one that changes throughout life. This comes about through the images of the self that are reflected back to it by others with whom there is social contact, and the ability of the self to be reflexive. Reflexivity means that one can respond to one's self in the manner of another, that is, to be an object to one's self and make indications about one's surroundings. This understanding

between the self and others and the self and "me" is facilitated by gesture and language for social contact is marked by symbols and meanings which must be interpreted. Thus, in Mead's view, society is made up of individuals who adjust their actions to one another based upon the meanings they come to share. In this way, society also changes because the self is undergoing change and being reformed through social interaction.

Another key figure in this approach to sociology is Herber Blumer (1969), who coined the name "symbolic interactionism." Blumer has articulated a systematic statement of the theory and method of symbolic interactionists which is derived from Mead's ideas. He states:

> The conscious life of the human being . . . is a continual flow of self-indications--notations of the things with which he deals and takes into account . . . . Instead of the individual being surrounded by an environment of pre-existing objects which play upon him and call forth his behavior, the proper picture is that he constructs his objects on the basis of his on-going activity." (1969, p. 80)

Human beings give meaning to experience, make judgements about it and arrive at decisions about their actions. They also act back upon meanings by rejecting them or transforming them based upon how the meanings were interpreted. For Blumer, the concern of sociologists should be upon catching "the process of interpretation" by which people construct their actions. To do this, he advocates that the researcher make a direct examination of the social world through role-taking.

From Blumer's viewpoint, scientific research as it is currently practiced in sociology distorts the very phenomenon in which we are all grounded and which scientists purport to study, the empirical social world. His criticism of the traditional scientific approach to research rests upon the fact that much of what passes for a research design has not been critically examined.

As Blumer puts it,

> Inside of the "scientific protocol" one can operate unwittingly with false premises, erroneous problems, distorted data, spurious relations, inaccurate concepts, and unverified interpretations. There is no built-in mechanism in the protocol to test whether the premises, problems, data, relations, concepts and interpretations are sustained by the nature of the empirical world. (1969, p. 29)

Thus, it is absolutely important that the researcher maintain a close relationship to the empirical social world, especially that segment of it that is chosen for study. One must have personal involvement, then, with the persons or life situation to be studied in order to be able to see how that situation is being interpreted by the persons who are living in it and what interactions are going on there. Science must pass the test of being empirically valid.

The form of inquiry used by symbolic interactionists is field based and methods are developed by the researcher to fit the kind of situation uncovered during an initial involvement in it. Prescribed, formula-like methods would tend to distort the phenomenon under investigation.

Phenomenological Sociology

The next radical or creative approach to sociology is phenomenological sociology. Phenomenology is the name of the philosophical investigations developed by Edmund Husserl (1970), a professor of philosophy in Germany around the turn of the century. Husserl spent most of his life examining the problem of consciousness. Phenomenology is thus an inquiry into the life of consciousness, that is, the phenomena that appear to consciousness. This involved raising questions about how this phenomena comes to consciousness, what appearance it makes, and from whence does consciousness arise. Of importance to sociology are Husserl's concepts of an intentional consciousness and the "Lebenswelt" or life world.

According to Husserl, human consciousness grasps experience with a directedness. Consciousness is not a collection of stimuli to be sorted into a template of physical responses, but it is directed and focussed upon the life-world. It is this feature of directedness, that we have consciousness of something, which Husserl refers to in the notion of an intentional consciousness. In other words, there is more to consciousness than being the eye of the mind. Physiology alone cannot provide an adequate account of human consciousness.

It was not until late in Husserl's life that he considered the implications of a consciousness situated in a life-world. Consequently, consciousness could be thought of as being constituted or built up in the process of living. Day to day activities and events are the things which make an appearance in consciousness and toward which it is directed. A consciousness that is attentive to these phenomena was described by Husserl as being in the "natural attitude." Another interesting feature of consciousness, however, is that it can transcend itself, that is, reflect upon an experience. One can bracket the events, thoughts and acts of lived experience. The validity of these things can be put aside so that they may be examined beyond the lived moment. If Husserl was alive today, it is possible that the term "instant replay" might appear in his writings. While this term may do an injustice to the meticulousness of his work, it does serve as a useful description of this idea.

The linkage of Husserl's phenomenology to sociology was brought about by another German scholar, Alfred Schutz. Schutz studied Husserl's work as well as that of the sociologist, Max Weber. Weber took the position that sociology involved the interpretation of social action (Morris, 1977, p. 13). A sociologist could gain insights about society by understanding or gaining the meaning of an act for individuals as they interacted with one another.

Schutz's contributions to sociology consist of the blending of Husserl's and Weber's ideas, and at a later point, incorporating some of the ideas of Mead and Dewey into his work. Schutz developed the notion of the life-world with such concepts as the "biographically determined situation," the "social stock of knowledge," "typifications," and "face-to-face relationships." He described the life-world as a social world into which we are all born at various times and places. We come to know the world, since it is an abstract, but empirical one, through interaction with parents, relatives, teachers and others with whom one has contact in a face-to-face relationship. Mediated through these persons is the social stock of knowledge or what one has to know in order to conduct one's self in the life-world. The social stock of knowledge is comprised of many "recipes" or collections of meaningful actions for conducting one's self. These recipes involve the typical ways of doing things like eating with a fork or stopping for a red light. Such typifications are embedded in language and provide a common structure of experience which enables one to communicate with others and adjust one's conduct to what is acceptable. By and large, typifications are taken for granted and adopted by most of us without too much thought. How many persons actually know why we eat with forks or why red is the color used to mean stop?

From the perspective of phenomenological sociology, then, a researcher's inquiry is into the phenomena of the social world (Psathas, 1973). One's purpose as a sociologist is to illuminate the taken for granted features and structures of the social world as they appear in human consciousness and to reflect upon them and criticize them. Again, as in symbolic interactionism, the method by which data is collected and analyzed depends upon the context of the phenomenon under investigation.

Ethnomethodology

The final approach to be examined in this paper is ethnomethodology. It is sometimes called "garfinkeling" because of the name of its founder, Harold Garfinkel. Garfinkel's perspective on sociology is one that combines aspects of symbolic interactionism and phenomenological sociology. The emphasis in ethnomethodology is upon finding out the methods by which people accomplish the affairs of everyday life. Put another way, ethnomethodologists are engaged in the discovery of the practical reasoning that takes place in life situations. It is not the actions of people that have significance for the ethnomethodologist, but what people say about what they are doing. As such, ethnomethodology is not concerned with large-scale surveys or the "grand theory" often found in sociology, but with the micro-analysis of ordinary events.

Topics that might be investigated from this perspective are the rituals that people engage in as they greet one another and carry on a casual conversation, the cues that one gives to others to show that a conversation could be interrupted, or the unspoken decisions that people make about the order in which they get on an elevator. The researcher in this approach conducts interviews and gathers accounts of the rules or guidelines of action from persons situated in a given context. The researcher may also behave in ways that are unexpected in order to find out what rules are being used in a situation.

Of these three viewpoints in sociology, ethnomethodology is the least structured, for as Roy Turner (1974), an ethnomethodologist, states:

> 'Theories' and 'methods' (in their usual sociological sense) are here regarded as socially organized and accomplished products and practices in their own right, and so regarded they are endlessly fascinating as topics. (p. 7)

Implications

These contemporary theories in sociology could be useful in the study of art education. All of them focus upon meanings, interpretations, social context,

beliefs, and interaction. What is significant is how people describe life in the world. They also describe human beings as persons who have personalities that are unique and which are not entirely manifestations of physiological processes. Human beings are seen as initiators of action and as creative agents. These premises about human beings seem to me to be ones that validate art.

Knowing about art and its teaching, then, would come about through field experience. A researcher would participate in a selected situation and examine it in many ways. One could take on the role of the participants in the situation, interview them, or make videotapes. This approach, again, resembles art in that the methods of research are varied as are the media in the visual arts. A method like a medium could be chosen for its appropriateness and its power to express. In all of these viewpoints, knowledge of an event or situation is acquired for the purpose of acting upon it, that is, to make judgments about what is found. This type of research is, again, empirically closer to what is done in the visual arts. It appears that any one of these three viewpoints in sociology provides a theoretical orientation and a methodology that is more appropriate to the study of art education than the often used traditional frameworks of psychology.

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